

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Foutch Industries

#### Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Foutch Industries Becomes a Tier I Automotive Supplier with the Assistance of TMEP

##### Client Profile:

Foutch Industries, located in Smithville, Tennessee, provides auto body paint and interior repair and maintenance. The company started as a body shop that painted mufflers for Tenneco when Tenneco produced more than their paint line could handle. The company continued to provide overflow painting capacity to Tenneco to the point where owner Tracy Foutch decided to close the auto body shop and open a coatings company. Foutch Industries employs 10 people.

##### Situation:

Initially, Foutch Industries began with one paint line with approximately 15 employees on one shift. As the business grew, Foutch needed to expand the facility but was faced with environmental compliance issues that threatened the company's growth. The company contacted the Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership (TMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

##### Solution:

As Foutch Industries changed from a body shop to a paint shop they were faced with environmental issues that spray painting presented to them. TMEP was able to help the company with the construction and operating air permits for the original spray coating line. Business continued to grow and Foutch Industries then needed to add a powder coating line. Powder coating is exempt from air permitting. Based on client specifications, solvent-based paints were still being mandated. As a result, TMEP's environmental engineer was able to provide the construction permit application for Foutch Industries to win approval for the line from the state.

##### Results:

- \* Tier 1 supplier for Mercedes.
- \* Provide coating for automotive parts for a variety of automotive OEM's.
- \* Hired 70 new employees.

##### Testimonial:

"Without the help of TMEP we could not have gotten to the point of being able to grow to become a Tier 1 supplier."

Tracy Foutch, Owner